

OH-94-2 North Full-Face Respirators

OFFICE OF HEALTH

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North Full-Face Respirators

In April 1993, employees of EG&G, the contractor for the Rocky Flats Plant in Golden, Colorado, experienced two failures with the North Full-Face Respirator, Model 7600-8A. On both occasions, the adapter that connects the filter cartridge to the facepiece broke when the user collided with a structure in a restricted area. Half-face respirators were not affected.

North has said that these failures are not widespread, frequent, or indicative of a manufacturing defect. Instead, North asserts that breakage occurred from the collision. North has not issued a recall notice for the adapter.

As a result of these breakages, North has redesigned the cartridge adapter and replaced the adapter. North has incorporated 30 percent glass-filled polypropylene to the cartridge adapter to improve resistance to impact ("tensile strength") and to provide more heat and chemical resistance. The redesigned adapter is easily replaced by users and is marked to distinguish it from the original one.

Department of Energy (DOE) and DOE contractor employees who use North Model 7600-8A respirators should replace the old cartridge adapter with the new, high strength cartridge adapter. Replacement information can be obtained directly from North.

For more information, contact Mr. Don Reycroft, Product Manager, North Safety Equipment, 401-943-4400, extension 120, or Mr. Carlos Coffman, EH-412, 301-903-6493.